

Energy Under Secretary Visits INL

U.S. Department of Energy Under Secretary C.H. "Bud" Albright visited Idaho National Laboratory on Monday, February 11, to learn more about its work and missions. His all-day tour included briefings on research projects in Idaho Falls, tours at desert nuclear facilities and a look at cleanup operations.

"It's a lot to take in," said Albright of his first visit to INL. "But there's no substitute for seeing it firsthand."

Since August 2007, Albright has overseen DOE's Energy and Environment programs, including applied energy R&D and nuclear waste management and cleanup. His special technical advisor Michael Davis accompanied him on Monday's visit. Shane McLean, a policy advisor for Dennis Spurgeon, Assistant Secretary for Nuclear Energy, also toured INL Monday.

The group boarded a bus at 8 a.m. with DOE-Idaho Operations Office Manager Beth Sellers, INL Laboratory Director John Grossenbacher and INL Science & Technology Deputy Lab Director Dave Hill. At the Bonneville County Technology Center, they learned about INL's nuclear hydrogen program and its advanced vehicle testing activity and plug-in hybrid car demonstrations.

At the Materials and Fuels Complex, the group toured the Fuel Conditioning Facility to hear about INL's pyroprocessing work. During lunch they discussed INL's National and Homeland Security projects.

"That's good, that's very good," Albright said at the conclusion of the briefing from K.P. Ananth, National and Homeland Security associate laboratory director. "It sounds like you're doing good work and sounds like you're doing it in a great way too."

After lunch, the group toured the Advanced Test Reactor and the Integrated Waste Treatment Unit under construction at INTEC. The day concluded with a visit to the Radioactive Waste Management Complex, where the group watched workers open and empty a recently unearthed waste drum.

Albright introduced himself and shook hands with nearly every employee he encountered, and insisted everyone call him Bud. During the bus ride back to Idaho Falls, he learned more about INL's role in the Global Nuclear Energy Partnership and the Next Generation Nuclear Plant.

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Photo: Energy Under Secretary Albright

Energy Under Secretary Albright gets a close look at an inactive test furnace at the hydrogen lab.